

### *Vestal High School Student's Artwork to Be Displayed in Halls of Congress*

Washington, DC - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today announced that Dillon Utter, a senior at Vestal Senior High School who recently accepted a scholarship to the School of Visual Arts in New York City, has won the 2011 Congressional Art Competition for New York's 22nd Congressional District. Utter's work, a self portrait entitled "Awakening" will hang alongside artwork from congressional districts throughout the country. Utter is invited to attend the unveiling ceremony in Washington, D.C.



"I am so proud of the wonderful artwork being produced by students from throughout the congressional district I represent," said Hinchey. "These talented young artists demonstrate why it is so important to maintain strong funding for the arts in all of our schools. I congratulate the winner, Dillon Utter, and all of the finalists and entrants in this year's competition. I am so pleased that my fellow Members of Congress and visitors to the U.S. capitol will be able to enjoy this excellent artwork from our part of New York."

This year's competition saw 30 young artists participate from the Hudson Valley to the Southern Tier. Hundreds of area residents helped select a finalist by viewing and voting for their favorite pieces of artwork at Hinchey's official Facebook page. Other finalists included:

- "A Day in the Mind of Me" by Adrianna Sturgis, New Paltz High School (Facebook Finalist)
- "After Five" by Emilia Licata, Pine Bush High School
- "Elijah" by Olivia McKee, New Paltz High School

The winner was selected by a panel of judges from the State University of New York at New Paltz art department. The finalist judges included Mary Hafeli, Dean of School of Fine and Performing Arts, Myra Mimlitsch-Gray, Chair of the Department of Art and Wayne Lempka, Art Collections Manager of the Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art.

"Dillon Utter's self portrait demonstrates both an advanced technical mastery with regards to materials employed and a strong thought process," said Lempka. "This work is both fresh in its appearance but nods to techniques of painting from past centuries. His work is exciting and dynamic and shows the importance of encouraging the talents of young people in high school. I am very impressed with the overall talent that I saw today at this judging."

The competition, which was initiated by Congress in 1982, includes hundreds of thousands of high school students from across the nation. One piece from each congressional district will be displayed in the Cannon Tunnel of the U.S. Capitol Building in Washington, DC.